January 24, 2005

Contact: Joe Meehan, ADF&G

(907) 267- 2281 or joe_meehan@fishgame.state.ak.us

McNeil River and Round Island Wildlife Viewing Permits Now Available

ANCHORAGE – Wildlife viewing permit applications are now available on-line for both the McNeil River and Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuaries at www.wildlife.alaska.gov.

"The permit period is now open for both areas," said Joe Meehan, wildlife biologist with the Alaska Department of Fish & Game. "We're just trying to get the word out."

Permit applications to view brown bears at the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary must be submitted online or mailed by March 1. Mailed applications must reach Anchorage by March 15. There is a non-refundable application fee of \$25 per person. Applicants are entered into a lottery and if drawn, Alaska residents pay a \$150 fee and non-residents pay \$350 for a four-day permit.

On-line applications to visit <u>Round Island</u>, within the Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary, and to view walruses are now available and require a user fee of \$50. Permits are issued on a first-come, first-served basis.

Larry Aumiller, manager of the McNeil River sanctuary, and Diane Calamar Okonek, manager of Round Island, encourage Alaska's residents and visitors to take advantage of our own world-class wildlife viewing destinations.

Applications and additional permit information may be found at the ADF&G web site at www.wildlife.alaska.gov or by visiting any Alaska Department of Fish & Game office.

For more information about Alaska wildlife viewing, please contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game at (907) 267-2532.